

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS



A SIMPLE method of generating formaldehyde gas for the disinfection of rooms has recently been advocated by the Board of Health of Illinois. It is to be recommended especially to nurses on private duty, on account of its promptness of action, its inexpensiveness and its simplicity.

The gas is generated by pouring a formaldehyde solution over the crystals of potassium permanganate in an open vessel. To disinfect in this way it is necessary to have two pails, a small one holding about a gallon, and a larger one holding probably five or six gallons.

For an ordinary sized room one set of pails is sufficient, but two or more may be used, according to the size of the room to be disinfected. In preparing the room all cracks or openings should be packed; all drawers, closets and cupboards opened; blankets, rugs and clothing spread out. There should be no curtains or other hangings immediately over or against the pails. Everything should be arranged so as to leave the room promptly.

The required amount of potassium permanganate is put into the smaller pail, and this pail set in the larger one. The solution of formaldehyde is poured over this solution.

The crystals should not be dropped into the formaldehyde. The amounts used are: Half a pound of potassium permanganate and one part of a 40 per cent. solution of formaldehyde to every 1000 cubic feet of air space. Not more than one pound of potassium permanganate or one quart of the solution of formaldehyde should be used in each pail. It is preferable to use only half that amount in each and use more sets of pails if necessary.

The pails should be equally distributed about the room. If only one is used it should be placed in the center. Newspapers spread widely underneath the pails will catch any overflow.

It is advisable to have the formaldehyde in wide-mouthed bottles so that it may be poured out quickly.

The door is closed immediately and packed round at once. The room should be left closed for a minimum of three hours, then opened and aired.

Formaldehyde gas generated in this way reaches its maximum of disinfecting power in a very few moments. Bacteria which would withstand a similar quantity generated slowly yield to the gas in this

highly concentrated form. The effect of temperature in this method of disinfection is not yet known. It is uncertain whether at a temperature below 60° it would be efficient. Good results have been obtained at 66°.

R. W. CROSS.

I

“What are the possibilities of the American trained nurse for private duty in France and Germany? Would she have to have a diploma from a school over there or would her American diploma be sufficient?”

A. B.

“American nurses will find very little chance of doing private duty in any foreign country, except among Americans living abroad, who form only a small part of foreign communities. An American nurse would have no chance at all of being employed by the German or French physicians for their own cases, unless it happened that she had made her home permanently abroad, learned the language and customs, and had become personally acquainted. It is not just so much a question of the diploma as it is of custom and preference. People like to have nurses of their own nationality and not a stranger, and I would not advise a nurse to go abroad to work unless she personally knows some physician who will give her cases, as she would certainly meet great disappointment. Then, few foreign families are willing to pay the prices expected by American nurses; and it is also to be noted that even Americans abroad often expect their nursing to be done for European prices. The extravagance of the average American nurse would make her very unacceptable to the average foreign family, for people abroad live frugally and plainly, and waste or carelessness is almost unknown among them. The heedless lavishness of the Americans makes it very hard for them to adapt themselves to foreign domestic life.”

L. L. DOCK.

II

“Nearly all the babies that I care for have very loose bowels, having from four to ten stools each twenty-four hours. I have tried to discover the cause and remove it but have seldom been successful in so doing. Do you believe that much can be done by restricting the diet of the mother?”

L. M. A.

“Nearly all my babies have loose bowels for the first two or three

weeks, having three to six movements daily. I pay no particular attention to the matter unless the discharges are irritating or otherwise pathologic. If there are more than six movements I usually can find a cause,—*e.g.*, persistence of colostrum, too rich milk, a very nervous mother, cascara, etc., given the mother, fruits in too great amount, or leguminous diet of mother. Other causes are too rapid nursing by the baby (the milk is cascaded into the stomach), and overfeeding. These are without real disease of the intestinal tract. Indigestion, catarrh, and actual inflammation must also be sought. ('Do the albolene and cocoa-butter used on the mother's nipples affect the baby?' Perhaps, yes.)"

JOSEPH B. DELEE, M. D.

III

"I would like very much to know what a trained nurse is supposed to carry in her outfit. We have had great discussions on the subject and much difference of opinion."

M. P., California.

"Can any one suggest a convenient way of packing a large amount of clothing and supplies in a small space?"

N. B., Iowa.

"I FIND it a great comfort to my patient to use two basins and two wash-cloths in giving a bath,—one for the soap, the other for the rinsing. It prevents the sticky feeling of the old way. I rub each part with alcohol after the washing and drying, instead of giving the full bath followed by the alcohol rub."

A. E.

"WHEN I do private duty the diets give me as much concern as any other two or three things, and I am always glad of anything nourishing which can be quickly prepared, especially if it is not sweet. I sometimes beat the yolk of an egg quite light and pour on it—stirring well, any sort of broth or soup I have. Two yolks can be used if more nourishment is wanted. If whites are used, the soup will look curdled. A broth can be quickly made of two or three kinds of vegetables, grated, and cooked in boiling water a short time—potatoes, onions, carrots, peas, turnips—nearly any vegetable to give flavor or consistency."

J. B.

WHEN a person gets a cinder in his eye, the natural impulse is to put the hand to the eye at once. This should not be done, for even the slightest touch on the eyelid may cause the foreign object

to become imbedded and difficult to remove. If the hands are resolutely kept away from the face, there is a chance that the tears which come will wash out the offending particle.

IF water gets into the ear when one is bathing, it sometimes causes a feeling of deafness and discomfort and is hard to remove. Five or ten drops of alcohol may be put into the ear, allowed to remain a moment, and then gently wiped out. Relief will be instantaneous, as alcohol has a great affinity for water.



THERE is not a physician in the land who is worthy of the notice of decent men who does not give a third of his life gratuitously to the poor. Without this gratuitous service hospitals like this would be impossible. You are to imitate the charitable physician. Never back out of a case because of the fee. Poor women need nurses more than rich women need them. Go to the poor and fit your fee to the family as the physician does.—*Dr. Austin O'Malley to the nurses of St. Agnes' Hospital, Philadelphia.*

THE Martin farm at Yonkers, N. Y., is reported to have been bought by Mr. Alexander Smith Cochran, who will build a sanitarium for free tuberculosis cases for New York City.

THE first month's report of the Directory for Nurses managed by the Trained Nurses' Association of Denver, Col., has been most encouraging and augurs for the success of the undertaking.

EFFORTS are being made by the Woman's Club of Lynchburgh, Va., to support a district nurse in that city. It is most probable that the work will begin this fall.